



C onfigure



## Joining Columns that Include Dates

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I recently found a tip called "Merging Two Columns into One in Excel" ([www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,33100,00.asp](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,33100,00.asp)). The tip shows how to add area codes in one column to phone numbers in another. I tried to use the same formula to join text with dates, but it didn't work.

For example, suppose cell A1 reads Total Borrowing as of and B1 contains the date 12/31/2001. When I enter the formula in C1 as suggested in the tip, I get Total Borrowing as of 37256. Is there any way to get the result to read 12/31/2001 rather than a serial date?

Tony Acker

The basic technique will work with dates, but you must change the formula. To join the information from two cells that contain text or numbers, enter the formula =A1&" "&B1 into a third cell. This tells Excel to start with whatever is in A1, add a space, and then insert whatever is in B1. As you've discovered, however, Excel translates dates into serial dates. Here's a modified formula that tells Excel to extract the month, day, and year from the value in B1, and insert each separately, along with slashes, to give the format m/d/yyyy:

=A1&" "&MONTH(B1)&"/"&DAY(B1) &"/"&YEAR(B1)

The formula will read Total Borrowing as of in A1, the date 12/31/2001 in B1, and produce the result Total Borrowing as of 12/31/2001.

You can also get the same result by typing the formula =A1&" "&TEXT(B1,"mm/dd/ yyyy") in C1.

As described in the original tip, if you need to join two columns, copy the formula as far down the third column as needed. To convert the formula results to text, select the third column, choose Edit | Copy, then Edit | Paste Special, then Values, and OK. You can then delete the first two columns.

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